



W I D E O P E N O P E R A

GIOACHINO ROSSINI

THE **BARBER** OF
SEVILLE



RTÉ lyric fm



Wide Open Opera

Artistic Director: Fergus Sheil
Executive Producer: Gavin O'Sullivan
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W I D E O P E N O P E R A

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Music by **GIOACHINO ROSSINI**

Libretto by **CESARE STERBINI**

Sung in Italian with English surtitles

Chorus of Wide Open Opera
Orchestra of Wexford Festival Opera

**NATIONAL OPERA HOUSE
WEXFORD: 16 APRIL 2016**

**BORD GÁIS ENERGY THEATRE
DUBLIN: 20, 22, 23 APRIL 2016**

A new production, produced and presented by Wide Open Opera
The Barber of Seville was first performed on Feb 20th 1816
at the Teatro Argentina, Rome.

This production is being recorded by RTÉ lyric fm for future broadcast.

WELCOME



I'm delighted to welcome you to this evening's production of Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* produced by Wide Open Opera.

Since the company was formed in 2012, we have presented a wide variety of opera to audiences in Ireland and internationally. *The Barber of Seville* is the most famous and celebrated title we have produced to date.

Previously we have had two productions at the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre in 2012 (*Tristan und Isolde*) and 2014 (*Nixon in China*). We have performed in the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, Cork Opera House, Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick, Grand Opera House, Belfast and Millennium Forum Derry. *The Barber of Seville* marks our first visit to the National Opera House, Wexford. Internationally our productions have been seen at the Edinburgh International Festival, Royal Opera House, London, St Ann's Warehouse New York and next year in Les Théâtres de la Ville, Luxembourg. Of our seven previous productions, four have been world premieres, and two Irish premieres.

As well as producing work in theatres, we have made opera on the streets of Dublin, in the GPO, Connolly Station, Mountjoy Square as well as other public spaces. We have live streamed on the web, broadcast on radio and produced operas on video for internet distribution. Just recently a film version of *The Last Hotel* by Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh (a co-production with Landmark Productions) was made in association with Brink Films for Sky Arts.

After all this new work it is a joy to approach one of opera's best known and best loved titles. Our starting point for tonight's production was to showcase the remarkable Irish mezzo-soprano Tara Erraught in her signature role, appearing for the first time in a complete opera production in her native Ireland. Tara has had a remarkable international career in recent times. Based in Munich for the past eight years, she is company principal at the Bavarian Staatsoper, and has also performed in Vienna, Hamburg, Washington, Glyndebourne and many other places. She is the perfect Rossini singer and it is wonderful to present her remarkable talent to Irish audiences. Tara has participated closely in the planning of this production and I'd like to pay warm tribute to her as a colleague and artistic partner, not just for her performance skills.

Tara is not the only astonishing singer in tonight's cast. It's also a great privilege to present Irish baritone Gavan Ring in the title role of the opera. Gavan sang the smallest of all roles in our 2012 *Tristan und Isolde* (just four bars), and it's amazing to see the formidable career he has developed since then, and great to welcome him back to Wide Open Opera in what is for him a perfect role. Throughout this programme booklet you will be introduced to our other singers, all of whom have worked tirelessly together to create a genuine ensemble cast.

I'd also like to pay tribute to our creative team, notably director Michael Barker-Caven, designer Jamie Vartan and lighting designer Sinéad Wallace. I'm a great admirer of all of these artists individually and they have been an inspiring team with which to present what we hope will be an updated, fresh, witty and insightful production.

Wide Open Opera is a project-based company, assembling a large team of over 150 people to deliver tonight's production. In the pit we have the wonderfully talented Orchestra of Wexford Festival Opera. Our chorus and cover cast have been assembled in collaboration with DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama and our technical and production teams led by Peter Jordan and Gavin O'Sullivan have demonstrated remarkable skill and commitment.

The Barber of Seville is the first opera production to be seen in both the National Opera House, Wexford and the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, Dublin. It is the first time we have produced our own new production at BGET. We are very grateful to all the management and staff at both venues for working with us and sharing our vision for making great opera in Ireland.

Lastly as you sit back and enjoy tonight's performance, I would like to express my thanks to the Arts Council for the funding to create this production and also for their commitment and belief that Irish opera artists can produce work of the highest standards for audiences here in Ireland.

Enjoy the show!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fergus Sheil". The signature is stylized with a large 'F' and a cursive 'Sheil'.

Fergus Sheil
Artistic Director
Wide Open Opera

CAST AND COMPANY

FIGARO	Gavan Ring
ROSINA	Tara Erraught
COUNT ALMAVIVA	Tyler Nelson
DR BARTOLO	Graeme Danby
DON BASILIO	John Molloy
BERTA	Mary O'Sullivan
FIGRELLO / OFFICER	Brendan Collins
AMBROGIO	Conor Breen

DIRECTOR	Michael Barker-Caven
CONDUCTOR	Fergus Sheil
SET & COSTUME DESIGNER	Jamie Vartan
LIGHTING DESIGNER	Sinéad Wallace

Performance timings:

ACT I: 95 minutes

INTERVAL: 20 minutes

ACT II: 55 minutes

Members of the audience are requested to turn off all mobile phones, pagers and digital alarms.

Please refrain from audio, video or photographic recording of any kind.

Sarah Richmond covers the role of Rosina.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Davey Kelleher
ASSISTANT CONDUCTOR & CHORUS DIRECTOR	Killian Farrell
RÉPÉTITEUR	Richard McGrath
ASSISTANT RÉPÉTITEUR	Maria Geheran
PRODUCTION MANAGER	Peter Jordan
STAGE MANAGER	Paula Tierney
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS	Richie O'Sullivan Conleth Stanley
COSTUME SUPERVISOR	Monica Ennis
WARDROBE SUPERVISOR	Eimear Farrell
COSTUME ASSISTANTS	Beatrise Leikuca Kevin Kynes Florina Kawlessur
COSTUME MAKER	Denise Assas
TAILOR	Sean Jackson
WARDROBE TECHNICIANS	Frances White Marie Brady Linda Breen Hannah Fitzgerald
HAIR AND MAKE-UP	Patsy Giles
PROPS BUYER	Stephanie Ryan
PRODUCTION CARPENTERS	Nic Rée Peter Boyle
STAGE TECHNICIANS	Jacub Sobczak Edward McCarthy John Michael Murphy Graeme Doyle
CHIEF ELECTRICIAN	Eoin McNinch
LIGHTING	Pip Walsh Iain Behan Andrew Stuttard Richie Lambert
SURTITLE OPERATOR	Maeve Sheil
SET CONSTRUCTION	TPS
SCENIC ARTISTS	Liz Barker Jason McCaffrey Lulu Roche
TRANSPORT	Trevor Price Transport Owen Sherwin
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Gavin O'Sullivan
CONSULTING PRODUCER	Diego Fasciati
ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT	Siobhra Quinlan
GRAPHIC DESIGNER	Gareth Jones
PHOTOGRAPHER	Pat Redmond
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wide Open Opera would like to acknowledge
with gratitude the following:

Niall Doyle & Liz Meaney at the Arts Council, Stephen Faloon, Claire Whelan, Kate O'Leary, Liam Fitzgerald and all staff at Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, Aisling White, Tracy Ryan, David Stuttard and all staff at National Opera House, Wexford, David Agler, David McLoughlin and Joe Csibi at Wexford Festival Opera, Jennifer Hamilton, Fiona Howard, Ronan Grant and David Mooney at DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama, Laura MacNaughton at O'Reilly Theatre, Isabel Murphy and Sophie Rashbrook at Welsh National Opera, Simon Taylor, Catherine Kirby, Caroline Feehily and Paul Hunt at the National Concert Hall, Rosemary Collier at Opera Theatre Company, Emilio's Beetles, Simon Ash, Medb Brereton Hurley, Jessica Buchanan-Barrow, Bryan Burroughs, Adrianna Costin, Mary Craig, Ana De Archuleta, Mark French, Laura Grant, Laura Halley, Mairead Hurley, Carl Kennedy, Lisa Mahony, Jack Mastroianni, Anna Quinn, Simon Radke, Dermot and Sue Scott, Dominic Stafford Uglow.

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SYNOPSIS

PLOT AT A GLANCE

The young and beautiful Rosina is a ward of the elderly Dr Bartolo who plans to marry her. She is in love with the mysterious man who has serenaded her nightly from the street beneath her balcony. This is Count Almaviva, but dressed as a young student Lindoro. Count Almaviva enlists Figaro (the Barber) to help him gain entry to Bartolo's house to rescue Rosina. Bartolo's friend, Don Basilio (Rosina's music teacher), suspects a plot and warns Bartolo. The Count makes two disguised entries to the house. In Act I he arrives as a drunken soldier looking for lodgings. In act II he claims to be a substitute singing teacher, Don Alonso. Figaro and the Count manage to get a key to Rosina's balcony window and plan to return at midnight. An exchange of letters that took place earlier in the opera is now used by Bartolo to try to prove to Rosina that the Count is not serious in his love. She is devastated, but the lovers are finally reunited when the Count returns and reveals his true identity. He is Count Almaviva, not the poor student Lindoro. The couple are quickly married before Bartolo can prevent it.

ACT I



Count Almaviva is in love with Rosina, an imprisoned pupil of the elderly Dr Bartolo. The Count has disguised himself as a poor student called Lindoro and, with his servant Fiorello, he has arranged a band of musicians to play in the square under Rosina's window to serenade her. The band plays with more enthusiasm than skill, while Count Almaviva himself sings an aria in praise of her beauty (*Ecco ridente in cielo*). He pays the musicians for their services and they noisily depart as dawn breaks.



Figaro, the Barber, enters, singing of his skill in all matters of life, love and hairdressing (*Largo al factotum*). He and Almaviva recognise each other and Almaviva asks him for assistance in getting to Rosina. Figaro explains that Bartolo plans to marry her for her inheritance. Rosina drops a letter from her balcony for Almaviva, in which she asks him to reveal his name, status and intentions. Almaviva once again serenades her from the square, declaring his name to be Lindoro – a poor student (*Se il mio nome*).

Count Almaviva offers Figaro money in exchange for assistance, and in return Figaro hatches a plan to disguise the Count as a drunken soldier from a visiting regiment who is sent to Bartolo's house with orders to be quartered there (*All'idea di quell metallo*).

Inside Bartolo's house, Rosina sings about the voice of Lindoro which has enchanted her from below her window. She resolves to defeat the advances of Bartolo (*Una voce poco fa*). Bartolo arrives with Don Basilio the singing teacher. Bartolo explains to Basilio that he is planning to marry Rosina that very day. Basilio reveals that Almaviva is actively pursuing her and he suggests that the most effective way of derailing him is to start a series of rumours against him (*La calunnia*).

Figaro tells Rosina that Bartolo intends to marry her. However, he also tells her that Lindoro (Count Almaviva) is in love with her. She produces a letter from her pocket, which she instructs



Figaro to give to the Count (*Dunque io son*). Bartolo returns, strongly suspecting that Rosina has dispatched a message for Count Almaviva. However, she outwits him at every turn, leading him to vent his frustration in a rage aria (*A un dottor della mia sorte*).

The Count arrives in disguise as a drunken soldier, seeking quarters in Bartolo's house. An infuriated Bartolo claims he has an exemption from billeting soldiers, but Almaviva persists in his deception. He slips a note to Rosina while Bartolo is busy searching for his exemption letter. Basilio and Berta, the housemaid, enter, adding to the commotion, until they are all interrupted by the arrival of Figaro, who further fuels Bartolo's temper. The commotion has been heard by the neighbourhood. The police arrive. An officer tries to arrest Almaviva until he reveals his identity. The officer orders his troops to move back, and they declare the matter closed. All are in a state of shock, and sing of their astonishment and incredulity at the unfolding events.

ACT II



Bartolo is alone in his room, reflecting on recent events. He suspects that the drunken soldier was a spy sent by Count Almaviva. The Count himself then arrives, but now disguised as a music professor Don Alonso, a student of Basilio's. He claims that Basilio has taken ill, and that as a result he, Alonso, will be giving Rosina her singing lesson (*Pace e gioia*). About to be thrown out, he impulsively shows Bartolo a letter that Rosina had sent to him, and claims that he discovered it at the inn where he and Count Almaviva are lodging. He suggests to Bartolo that he give it to Rosina and pretend that he received it from another woman who is Almaviva's mistress, thus proving that the Count has dishonest intentions.



Bartolo is delighted at this suggestion and he allows the singing lesson to go ahead. During this lesson Rosina and Count Almaviva sing of their love for each other. He promises to save her from her enforced marriage to Bartolo (*Contro un cor*). Bartolo denounces the state of modern music and gives an example of the 'older' style of singing with an aria from the eighteenth century castrato singer Caffariello (*Quando mi sei vicina*).

Figaro arrives to give Bartolo his shave. In the process he is able to obtain the keys that will open Rosina's balcony window. Don Basilio enters, perfectly healthy, but everyone realises that his presence threatens their individual plans. He is told that he has scarlet fever and sent home, with the added encouragement of a bribe. Later, a furious Bartolo discovers that Don Alonso is in disguise.

The household maid Berta sings an aria bemoaning her fate as an unmarried spinster (*Il vecchiotto cerca moglie*). Basilio is brought in and Bartolo orders him to ensure that a notary is ready that evening, so that he and Rosina can be married. Bartolo then uses the letter that Rosina had written to Lindoro to convince her that

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she has been betrayed. In despair over this apparent deception, she is heartbroken and finally agrees to marry Bartolo, although she does wonder if Lindoro had perhaps lost the letter, and is still true to her (*Ah, se è ver*).

A thunderstorm rages. Later Figaro and Count Almaviva appear, holding lanterns. They use the key that Figaro had earlier taken from Bartolo to enter Rosina's room through the window. Rosina confronts the Count, who she still believes to be Lindoro. However, he reveals his true identity to be a nobleman. All is forgiven as they become enraptured with each other. Figaro urges them to move on, as two men have arrived at the front door of the house. The trio try to exit by the window, but the ladder has been removed. Basilio enters with the notary. They have arrived to marry Bartolo and Rosina. However, they are quickly persuaded to marry Almaviva and Rosina instead. Bartolo finally arrives, having earlier removed the ladder, but is too late to prevent the wedding. All rejoice and celebrate the happy couple.

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Jonathan Keates

One day someone will write, if they haven't already, an opera about the making of *the Barber of Seville*, with that most spry and genial of composers Gioacchino Rossini as its hard-driven but ultimately triumphant hero. Of all those works now forming the core of the international operatic repertoire, this one had the most unpromising genesis and very nearly left the stage as soon as it arrived. Like every other artistic genre, opera has its own rich tradition of cautionary tales but the story of how *The Barber* joined the canon is one with a happy ending.

Even as Rossini signed the contract for a new comic opera at Rome's Teatro Argentina in December 1815, circumstance was working against him. At the Argentina's counterpart, the Teatro Valle, his *Torvaldo e Dorliska*, a venture into the popular 'semi-serious' genre, had met with a cool reception and both houses were seriously strapped for cash. Their joint manager and owner, Duke Francesco Sforza Cesarini, found himself in charge not only of commissioning productions but of their actual staging besides. 'It is enough to make me spit blood,' he complained. 'Everybody shouts at me, I stay up half the night at rehearsals and lead the most wretched life'.

The librettist for both *Torvaldo e Dorliska* and the new opera, provisionally titled *Almaviva*, was Cesare Sterbini, for whom writing opera texts was a sideline from his day job as chief customs inspector for the Papal

States. Described by a contemporary as 'rich in invention, deeply learned and speaking several languages', he was 'passionate for music, which made his verses ideal for composers to set'. All this was doubtless true, but by an oversight Sterbini's contract was not signed till 17 January 1816, with the new opera's premiere scheduled for 5 February. For Duke Sforza Cesarini this proved a last straw. 'I'm sick of a world which is ruining my health and keeps me from my home and family,' he despaired. 'I am old' (he was just 44) 'and desire a quiet life'. A few weeks later Sforza died of exhaustion.

Rossini himself needed to be a great deal more robust when facing the considerable challenge of creating a new work capable of winning over his critics and sealing his reputation with the Roman public. A major problem was the existence of a certain well-loved comic opera composed some thirty years previously by Giovanni Paisiello and entitled *The Barber of Seville*. Based on Pierre Caron de Beaumarchais' French comedy *La precaution inutile ou Le barbier de Seville*, it had premiered in St Petersburg before taking Vienna by storm, where Mozart had used it as a model for his *The Marriage of Figaro*, adapted from Beaumarchais' sequel play. In Italy Paisiello's Barber had swiftly become a favourite with audiences in Naples, where his career originally took off, and in Rome, whose theatrical public took a distinctly protective attitude to the piece.

So was Rossini's choice of subject a calculated act of artistic defiance? Almost certainly. Sterbini's libretto, while superficially adopting the dramatic outline followed by Paisiello, is both closer to Beaumarchais in its powerful characterization of Figaro, Dr Bartolo and Don Basilio and simultaneously more freewheeling in the way it handles (surely at Rossini's suggestion) the flow and pace of the comedy so as to make room for a dazzling variety of musical moods and styles within what is, after all, a not especially lengthy evening in the theatre. If Rossini's score took less than fifteen days to put together and involved borrowing themes and ideas from his earlier stage works, its creative energy was spurred by a sense that he was renewing the whole genre of Italian opera buffa (comic opera).

Neither composer nor librettist, however, was taking any chances with the initial presentation of a new *Barber of Seville* to a Roman audience both conservative and distinctly partisan in outlook. A 'Notice to the Public' in Sterbini's libretto emphasized its inclusion of 'several novel situations for musical numbers which accord with current theatrical taste, so far have things altered since the famous Paisiello wrote his score'. Why bother, some might have felt? For this most illustrious of operatic hostages to fortune, the first night fiasco became the stuff of legend.

Admirers of Paisiello's Barber were out in force, jeering and whistling at everything, from the fancy Spanish-style jacket sported by Rossini to the resolute perseverance of the elderly bass Zenobio Vitarelli as Don Basilio, who, falling flat on his face after tripping over a trapdoor, sang the aria *La calunnia* with a bleeding nose. A cat walked onto the stage and spent much of the first act exploring the set before being hurled into the wings. Matters were not improved by a

voice from the gallery crying 'We're at Duke Sforza Cesarini's funeral!'

The only number to make its mark on that memorable February night in 1816 was Rosina's *Una voce poco fa*, as sung by the brilliant young contralto Geltrude Righetti Giorgi. Years later she recalled Rossini's strangely philosophical calm beneath the hubbub, 'as if he were merely an indifferent onlooker'. This shrewdest of operatic masters was biding his time, confident that a genuinely appreciative audience would materialise the following evening, as indeed it did. 'They cheered this work of mine', he wrote to his mother, 'with an indescribable fanaticism, for which I came on stage five or six times to applause of an entirely new kind, that made me weep with delight.'

Rossini's unshakeable faith in his Barber had abundantly paid off. That 'applause of an entirely new kind' was for a new kind of comic opera, where the stereotypical characters – pompous old fool, scheming young woman, wisecracking servant, etcetera – are flesh-and-blood individuals, asserting their own vitality and autonomy, however paradoxical the dramatic situation. The revolutionary zest of Beaumarchais' original play acquires fresh energy in Figaro's *Largo al factotum*, Rosina's *Una voce poco fa* and the supercharged menace of Basilio's *La calunnia*, or in masterly ensembles like the trio *Ah qual colpo inaspettato* and the quintet in which Figaro, Rosina and the Count scare off the meddling Basilio. The last word on Rossini's achievement belongs to the composer himself. 'My Barber of Seville is a masterpiece because it is music that springs directly from the action and follows it with almost excessive care'.

Originally printed in the Welsh National Opera 2016 Spring programme



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REALISING ROSINA: OPERATIC CHARACTERISATIONS OF BEAUMARCHAIS'S HEROINE

By Linda Lister

The profusion of operatic realisations of Rosina cannot overshadow the fact that the role of Rosina is more readily associated with one composer: Rossini. Paisiello (1740-1816) was a cardinal figure in the Italian musical realm, and his *Il barbiere di Siviglia* maintained high esteem. As a result, considerable discretion proved necessary when Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868), along with librettist Cesare Sterbini, wrote another operatic adaptation of Beaumarchais' *Barbier*. Etiquette required that Rossini be properly deferential to the elder composer; thus, when Rossini's opera premiered in 1816 (four months before Paisiello's death), it appeared under the title *Almaviva, ossia l'inutile precauzione*, out of respect to Paisiello. Despite Rossini's reverence, Paisiello's supporters were unappeased and comprised a large and hostile contingent of the opening night audience.

The first *Almaviva* was a veritable disaster. A vivid account of the performance is provided in the memoirs of the production's first Rosina, Geltrude Righetti-Giorgi (1793-1862). The farcical details described in her *Cenni di una donna già cantante il maestro Rossini* (1823) have become a part

of operatic legend, the highlight being a cat running around the stage during the finale. The cat stayed away for the second performance, and *Almaviva* eventually met with great success. Following Paisiello's death later that year, the opera assumed the title *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, and since that time it has remained the definitive operatic adaptation of that Beaumarchais comedy.

As indicated in an introductory notice to the libretto, Rossini and Sterbini made a conscious effort to differentiate their setting from that of Paisiello and Petrosellini, even interpolating and rearranging scenes. While Paisiello's opera may be more loyal to Beaumarchais in format, Rossini's opera seems more true to the play's spirit. Independence and strength of purpose permeate the characters of Rossini's opera, particularly that of Rosina. Rossini's musical depiction of Rosina emerges as a vibrant one. Indeed, his characterisation may have contributed to the adverse response that the opera first encountered, since his realisation struck listeners at first as being out of character and the young maestro was accused of transforming an ingénue into a virago.



GELTRUDE RIGHETTI-GIORGI

Rossini's audience seemed to object to the new Rosina's more wilful and wily nature. Gone are the reflective cavatinas and the sweet lyricism formerly associated with the Italian operatic Rosina defined by Paisiello. Rossini's fiery coloratura brings out her spirited and sensuous side. In addition, she is motivated less by an idealisation of love and more by the hormonal reactions of a young girl. Perhaps, too, the audience reaction was negatively influenced by the use of a mezzo soprano voice in the role. Accustomed to Rosina sung by light sopranos, they may have perceived the darker timbre of the mezzo soprano voice to infer different qualities about the character.

Because the issue of *fach* (vocal type) has caused some controversy in modern productions of *Barbiere*, it becomes relevant to the discussion of Rosina's character.

Rossini's original Rosina, Righetti-Giorgi, would later be his first Cenerentola (1817) as well. A number of the composer's leading female roles were conceived with the mezzo voice in mind, albeit a voice still flexible enough to negotiate his florid writing. Singers generally have strong opinions on the issue. Mezzos, not surprisingly, most often jealously guard their right to the role. Fiorenza Cossotto, for instance, states, "Rosina – hot-tempered, Spanish, passionate, romantic comes across best in the mezzo voice." It seems that a lower, darker voice is perceived as bringing depth and warmth to Rosina's personality. Heavier, lower voices, however, are frequently associated with older characters or maternal figures, so Rosina's youthful freshness may be sacrificed by the weightier vocal quality. Moreover, Rosina is not meant to sound like Bizet's *Carmen*.

Mezzos who have flourished as Rosina either have had lighter voices (e.g. Teresa Berganza, Vivica Genaux) or could be identified as *Zwischenfach* (between vocal types) in that they sing repertoire normally ascribed to separate voice categories (e.g. Frederica von Stade, Cecilia Bartoli). In the mid to late nineteenth century, a mezzo singing Rosina had become something of an anomaly. After the death of mezzo Maria Malibran in 1836, the so-called Victorian nightingales seemed to assume the role, namely Swedish soprano Jenny Lind and her successor Adelina Patti. In the twentieth century, Beverly Sills and Kathleen Battle joined the Rosina ranks.

The soprano tradition continued well into the twentieth century, as has the debate over Rosina and her best *fach*. Obviously, using a higher voice in the role necessitates some transpositions (namely of *Una voce poco fa* from E to F) and alterations of lower lying vocal lines. Soprano Roberta Peters asserts

that the role benefits from higher notes, interpolated embellishments, and cadenzas that bring exuberance and vitality to Rosina's character. No doubt female singers of various voice types will continue to vie for the role of Rossini's Rosina. The Metropolitan Opera's 2011 production appealed to both camps, casting both mezzo soprano Isabel Leonard and soprano Diana Damrau as alternating Rosinas.

Rossini introduces Rosina via the famous *Una voce poco fa*. The aria's bold, brilliant vocal writing has been interpreted by some to underscore the heroine's daring, brazen character traits. The opening of the aria, with its double-dotted rhythms, recalls the grandiloquent, self-important style of an opera seria figure, not an opera buffa ingénue. Rosina's coloratura is not merely conceit; in one sense, she is convincing herself of her own resolve and gathering her energies in order to pursue her goal. Furthermore, she is a young girl overwhelmed by the yearning of her first love, a circumstance that rarely provokes subtle reactions. Overt musical gestures portray her genuine excitement and inexperience. The embellishments that singers inevitably add to the piece can highlight the character's youth and vivaciousness.

The mood changes in the second section of the aria. Rosina presents an inventory of her virtues: she is sweet, respectful, and obedient. This ingenuous self-analysis is interrupted by another change marking the inevitable qualification. That "but" (ma in Italian) becomes an autonomous musical entity summing up with unrivalled conciseness the essence of Rosina's contrariness. The qualification, of course, is that if someone crosses her on matters of romance, Rosina will become a viper. The coloratura turns aggressive, plunging down

beneath the staff to a low G#. The remainder of the piece vividly displays this side of her personality: a combination of sheer enjoyment in playful trickery and profound resolve to overcome her oppression. Rosina is mischievous not manipulative, determined not despotic.

In summary, Rossini's Rosina is a clever and charming heroine, and the composer relies on coloratura to depict both her youthful zeal and her shrewd nature. Whether sung by a soprano or mezzo, the role requires a gifted singer with a voice of wide range and agility, not to mention stylistic flair, charisma, and boundless energy. Rossini's musical realisation, in short, represents Rosina in perhaps her most familiar and essential form: flirtatious, quick-witted, and undeniably appealing.

SINGING ROSINA

By Tara Erraught

As soon as I first sang Rosina, I fell in love with her character. It was the first full leading role that I studied and what struck me about her was that she is a great mix of personality traits; smart, witty, vulnerable, determined, playful and energetic. Her character is brilliantly laid out in her first aria *Una voce poco fa* where she says

I'm docile and respectful, obedient, sweet and loving.

I can be ruled and guided.

But if I'm obstructed I can be a viper!

I'll play a hundred tricks before I give up!

That one little word "But" in the third line ("ma" in Italian) is where she really shines a light on her wilful character. It always brings a smile to me.

Of course capturing Rosina's character comes primarily through the singing. What I find is that singing all these highly ornamented lines feels very realistic for me. Every single turn, each roulade, all the coloratura fits naturally into my voice and my character, and so I don't feel like I'm "acting", more that I'm just "being" her. It feels natural being Rosina.

Rosina has many aspects to her. This is why, although I'm now singing this role for my 25th time, I'm still discovering new dimensions. Every time I take out Rosina I see a new colour. My own life experiences, which change day by day, get reflected in her character. I bring something of my own experiences to her, and she absorbs these willingly.

Of course many singers before me have done the same. Each Rosina sounds incredibly different, but her character stands up to these differences. I love interpretations by Cecilia Bartoli, Renata Tebaldi, Maria Callas and Teresa Berganza. Each one incredibly unique, but Rosina shines through! It is a testament to the brilliance of Rossini's composition that there are so many and varied ways to sing it.

Although I've previously sung Rosina at the Vienna State Opera, Hamburg State Opera and Bavarian State Opera, this is my first time to create the role in a new production, and it's my first complete opera performance at home in Ireland. For this production I'm delighted to include the aria *Ah se è ver* in Act Two. This aria was not part of the opera's premiere in Rome in 1816, but Rossini composed it for a revival in Venice in 1819 for the singer Joséphine Mainvielle-Fodor. It is not normally included in *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, but to me it's an important moment. At this point Bartolo has convinced Rosina that her lover is being unfaithful, but in this aria Rosina is not sure, and doesn't know whether to believe in Lindoro or not. I think it adds greatly to Rosina and portrays her as a more three-dimensional character.

I hope you will enjoy hearing Rosina as much as I will enjoy performing her in Wexford and Dublin. It's a huge pleasure to make opera in Ireland with an outstanding group of colleagues in this production. Enjoy!

BIOGRAPHIES

**MICHAEL
BARKER-CAVEN**
Director



Michael was Artistic Director of Ouroboros, Dublin (1995–2004) and Artistic Director of the Everyman Theatre, Cork (2011–2014). Opera credits include: *L'Amico Fritz* (Danish National Opera), *Der Vampyr*, *Pagliacci* – the latter an Irish Times Theatre Award (ITTA) Winner, Best Opera 2012 (Everyman/Cork Operatic Society), *Albert Herring* (Mid Wales Opera), *Medea* (Glimmerglass Opera, New York), *The Duenna* (English Touring Opera/Royal Opera House), *The Mines of Sulphur* (by Richard Rodney Bennett) – ITTA Winner, Best Opera 2008, *Transformations* (by Conrad Susa) – ITTA Winner, Best Opera 2006 (both for Wexford Festival Opera). Theatre credits include *Shadowlands* (London's West End – Wyndhams & Novello Theatre), *Conservatory* (Abbey Theatre), *Best Man* (Everyman/Project), *October*, *Miss Julie*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Blackbird*, *The Secret Garden*, *Dandelions*, *The Goat (or who is Sylvia?)*, *Skylight* (Landmark Productions), *Richard II* (co-production Abbey/Everyman), *Amadeus*, *Tales from Ovid* – ITTA Nominee, Special Judges Award 2002, *Macbeth*, *Richard III* – ITTA Nominee, Best Director 2001, *Mutabilitie*, *Anna Karenina* – ITTA Nominee, Best Director 1998, *Troilus & Cressida*, *Venus & Adonis*, *The Fetishist* (Ouroboros). Productions for the Gate Theatre, Dublin include *Little Women*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *Anna Karenina*, *Play* (Barbican/Gate), *Old Times*, *The Shape of Things* (ITTA Nominee, Best Director 2002), *Thérèse Raquin*.

CONOR BREEN
Ambrogio



A native of County Armagh, twenty-three-year-old tenor Conor Breen read English Literature at Queen's University Belfast. Having auditioned successfully for the Masters program at the Guildhall School of Music, London, Conor will begin his studies there in September, continuing with his current teacher, Adrian Thompson. He was selected to join NI Opera's Young Artist Programme of 2014/ 2015 and during his tenure, he sang as the tenor soloist in Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music* with the Ulster Orchestra; understudied the role of Narraboth in NI Opera's *Salome*; and performed in concert for TRH the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall for their inaugural state visit to Northern Ireland. Conor's roles for NI Opera include Fourth Jew, (*Salome*) and Prince of Persia (*Turandot*). Forthcoming engagements include the Mozart *Requiem* with Methodist College, Belfast and performances with Dublin-based professional chamber choir, Lassus. Conor has also appeared as a soloist in a variety of works such as: Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*; Handel's *Messiah*; Mozart's *Requiem*; Tippett's *Five Negro Spirituals*; and Stainer's *Crucifixion*.

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BRENDAN COLLINS **Fiorello & Officer**



Brendan trained at Cork School of Music where he was awarded the Pro Musica Singer of the Year Award. He continued his studies at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama and won a scholarship to study at La Monnaie/De Munt Opera Studio. He holds a Gold Medal in acting from LAMDA. Among his roles are Conte Almaviva (*Le nozze di Figaro*), Schaunard & Marcello (*La bohème*), Escamillo & Dancaire (*Carmen*), Aeneas (*Dido and Aeneas*), Leporello (*Don Giovanni*) and Demetrius (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). He has performed with Opera Ireland, Opera Theatre Company, English Touring Opera, Scottish Opera and NI Opera. He made his American début at the Kennedy Center, Washington D.C. with OTC premiering Irish composer Steven Deazley's opera *Bug Off!* With Glyndebourne Festival Opera he appeared as Arthur Jones in *Billy Budd* at both the Festival and the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York City. His radio appearances have included broadcasts on RTÉ lyric fm and BBC Radio 3. He sang on the original cast recording of John Gibsons' *Judith and Holofernes* singing the title role of Holofernes.

GRAEME DANBY **Bartolo**



For Wide Open Opera, Graeme Danby appeared as The Father in *Wake Up Son*, a new opera by Brian Irvine as well as Russian Soldier in Raymond Deane's *The Alma Fetish*. Graeme has performed the roles of Billy Jackrabbit (*La fanciulla del West*), Charrington (*1984* by Lorin Maazel), Gonzalo (*The Tempest* by Thomas Adès), Second Armed Man (*Die Zauberflöte*), Casino Manager (*The Gambler*) and Sacristano (*Tosca*) with the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. In over 1000 performances as principal, Graeme's roles with English National Opera include, Basilio (*The Barber of Seville*), Collatinus (*The Rape of Lucretia*), Dulcamara (*The Elixir of Love*), Quince, Snug (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Pooh-Bah (*The Mikado*), Ribbing (*A Masked Ball*), Sacristan (*Tosca*), Sarastro (*The Magic Flute*), Pimen (*Boris Godunov*), Bartolo (*The Marriage of Figaro*), Elviro (*Xerxes*) and Somnus (*Semele*). Further international engagements include: Teatro alla Scala Milan (*A Dog's Heart*; *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Liceu Barcelona (*The Fairy Queen*), Salzburg (*La clemenza di Tito*, *Wozzeck*), Opera National du Rhin Strasbourg (*Ion*), Palau Reina Sofia, Valencia (*1984*), de Vlaamse Opera (*Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Peter Grimes*, *Semele*), and the Los Angeles Philharmonic (*Where the Wild Things Are*). His recordings include: *Lulu*, *A Masked Ball*, *The Magic Flute* and *Salome* for Chandos Opera in English; and *The Tempest* for EMI.

TARA ERRAUGHT

Rosina



A native of Dundalk, Ireland, Tara Erraught is a graduate of the Royal Irish Academy of Music in Dublin, where she studied, and continues to study, with the acclaimed Royal Opera soprano Veronica Dunne. A resident principal soloist with the Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, Ms Erraught also works with famed German mezzo-soprano Brigitte Fassbaender. Tara has performed the role of Rosina with Bayerische, Hamburg & Wiener Staatsoper. Hailed as “The Queen of Bel Canto”, her Rossini roles also include Angelina (*Cenerentola*, Washington National Opera, Bayerische, Hamburg & Wiener Staatsoper). With the Bayerische Staatsoper, Tara has performed the roles of Carlotta (Strauss’s *Die Schweigsame Frau*, Op. 80,) Christa (Janáček’s *The Makropulos Affair*), Kathy & Brenda (Poul Rouders’ *Selma Jezkova*), Despina (having previously sung the role of Dorabella) (*Così fan tutte*), Prince Orlovsky (*Die Fledermaus*), Cherubino (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Kathleen Scott (Miroslav Srnka’s *South Pole*) and Hänsel (*Hänsel und Gretel*). Tara created and premiered the role of Kitty (Iain Bell’s *A Harlot’s Progress*, Theater an der Wien), and made her role début as Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier* at Glyndebourne Festival Opera, BBC Proms). Tara’s forthcoming appearances include performances for the Kennedy Center’s Ireland centenary celebration in Washington, DC, her role debut as Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro* for Bayerische Staatsoper, her Salzburg Festival début in Gounod’s *Faust* and a return to Dublin for Donna Elvira in *Don Giovanni* for Opera Theatre Company.

KILLIAN FARRELL

Assistant Conductor & Chorus Director



Killian Farrell is a pianist and conductor, currently in his final year at Trinity College, Dublin, majoring in musicology. In 2012 he was the first conductor to be appointed to Opera Theatre Company’s Young Associate Artist Programme. Since then he has worked as répétiteur and chorus master for all of Dublin’s major opera companies. Notable productions include acting as Chorus Master for Lyric Opera Productions’ *Rusalka* (2013) and *Tosca* (2014), Wide Open Opera’s *Nixon in China* (2014), and Opera Theatre Company’s *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (2014). Other highlights include conducting the world premiere of Brian Irvine’s opera *The Oldest Woman in Limerick* for Wide Open Opera. In May 2015 Killian was appointed chorus master for the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, and made his conducting début with the orchestra in August 2015. Recent engagements include performances of Brahms’ *Ein Deutsches Requiem* with the Jubilate Choir. He is a Britten-Pears Young Artist, and has also been invited to the Mozart Residency at the Aix-en-Provence festival in June, where he will work as a répétiteur. Next year he will continue his studies at the National Opera Studio in London.

DAVEY KELLEHER

Assistant Director



Davey is an interdisciplinary theatre director with an interest in music theatre, and collaborative devised theatre. He is a graduate of the drama department at the Samuel Beckett Centre, Trinity College Dublin, and holds a Master in Fine Art distinction in theatre directing from the Lir Academy Dublin. Davey works professionally as an independent theatre director, based in Ireland. As a practitioner, he leads workshops with professionals and students as well as delivering classes and individual coaching sessions. He is an associate director with London-based music-theatre company, Quite Nice Theatre, and has worked extensively across the UK and Ireland as a freelance director, producer, and workshop facilitator, as well as a festival coordinator for the UK-wide Shakespeare Schools Festival. He has worked as an associate and assistant director at the Gate Theatre and Olympia Theatre Dublin. He is currently director of *Glowworm* with Umbrella Theatre Project, and *LadyPlay* with Eccles Theatre.

RICHARD MCGRATH

Répétiteur



Richard holds a first class honours degree in Music and French from NUI Maynooth and a Masters in performance (piano accompaniment) from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, where he was also a student on the répétiteur course and subsequently held a répétiteur fellowship. Richard was a trainee répétiteur at English National Opera and since then he has worked with companies including NI Opera, Wide Open Opera and Opera Theatre Company. He was recently the répétiteur for the Landmark Productions/Wide Open Opera co-production of *The Last Hotel* (by Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh). Other operas Richard has worked on include *Rigoletto* (OTC), *The Elixir of Love* (OTC and NI Opera), *Nixon in China* (Wide Open Opera), *La bohème* (ENO), *The Barber of Seville* (ENO) and *La Traviata* (ENO). Forthcoming engagements for Richard include *La bohème* with Opera Theatre Company. Richard teaches in the vocal department at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama.

JOHN MOLLOY

Basilio



John Molloy studied at the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama in Dublin and at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester. He completed his studies at the National Opera Studio in London and was a Major Scholar of the Peter Moores Foundation. John has performed the roles of Kissinger *Nixon in China* (Wide Open Opera), Alidoro *La Cenerentola* (Scottish Opera/Opera de Rouen), Guccio *Gianni Schicchi* (Royal Opera House), Masetto *Don Giovanni* (English National Opera), Arthur *The Lighthouse* and Figaro *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Nationale Reisopera Netherlands), Le Commandeur *La Cour de Célimène* (Wexford Festival), Angelotti *Tosca*, Luka *The Bear*, Banco *Macbeth* and Dulcamara *L'Elisir d'Amore* (NI Opera), Raimondo *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Opera Holland Park), Snug *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Opera Ireland), Trinity Moses *Mahagonny*, Figaro *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Zuniga *Carmen* (Opera Theatre Company), Leporello *Don Giovanni*, Sarastro *Die Zauberflöte*, Bonze *Madama Butterfly* (Lyric Opera Productions). Concert performances include Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* (Shanghai Opera), Verdi's *Requiem* and Mendelssohn *St. Paul*, (RTÉ Concert Orchestra), Haydn's *Creation* (Continuo Rotterdam), Handel's *Messiah* (Rheinische Philharmonie Hallé) and Stravinsky's *Renard* (London Sinfonietta).

TYLER NELSON

Almaviva



Tyler Nelson's recent engagements include débuts as Le théière/Le petit vieillard (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*, Utah Symphony & Opera), Alfred (*Die Fledermaus*, Opera Naples), Trin (*La fanciulla del West*, Opera Omaha), performances of Handel's *Messiah* with Augustana College, Britten *Serenade* with the Utah Valley Symphony, and Beethoven's *9th Symphony* with the Saginaw Bay Symphony. A frequent performer at the Castleton Festival, Mr Nelson has performed Gonzalve (*L'heure espagnole*), Male Chorus (*Rape of Lucretia*), Gherardo and Rinuccio (*Gianni Schicchi*), the Mayor (*Albert Herring*), Maese Pedro (*El retablo del Maese Pedro*), Father (*7 Deadly Sins*), La Rainette (*L'enfant et les sortilèges*), Don Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*), and Almaviva (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*, Castleton Festival and the National Centre for Performing Arts in Beijing, China). Forthcoming performances include Ferrando (*Così fan tutte*, Le Festival Lyrique International de Belle-Île en Mer), soloist in Beethoven's *Mass in C* and Mozart's *Vesperae solennes de confessore*, Ottavio (*Don Giovanni*, New Orleans Opera) and a role début of Belmonte (*Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Dayton Opera).

MARY O'SULLIVAN

Berta



Mary O'Sullivan studied at the DIT Conservatory of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, and completed her studies at the International Opera Studio, Zürich Opera House. Performing widely, she has sung with Opera Ireland, RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Opera Theatre Company, Wexford Festival Opera, Scottish Opera, English Touring Opera, Lismore Opera Festival and the Zürich Festspiel. Her operatic roles include Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Titania (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Nanetta (*Falstaff*), Elvira (*L'Italiana in Algeri*), Miss Wordsworth (*Albert Herring*), Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Queen of the Night (*Die Zauberflöte*), Frasquita (*Carmen*), Zerlina (*Don Giovanni*), Valencienne (*The Merry Widow*), several roles in the Scottish Opera *Five:15* project including a tour to Cape Town, and the roles of Blonde (*Seraglio*) and Dorinda (*Orlando*) also for Scottish Opera. She has most recently performed the roles of Papagena and First Lady (*Magic Flute*) with Opera Theatre Company.

GAVAN RING

Figaro



Gavan Ring trained at the Royal Irish Academy of Music and the National Opera Studio, London. For Opera North Gavan has performed the roles of Schaunard (*La bohème*), Manuel in Falla (*La Vida Breve*), Jake Wallace (*La Fanciulla del West*), Figaro (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*) and Guglielmo (*Così fan Tutte*), Pluto (*Orpheus in the Underworld*, Scottish Opera), Morales (*Carmen*, Glyndebourne Festival Opera), Phoebus (*Fairy Queen*, Glyndebourne), Lieutenant Gordon (Kevin Puts' *Silent Night*, Wexford Festival Opera) Father Philippe (Holst's *The Wandering Scholar*, Wexford), Oompa Loompa (Peter Ash's *The Golden Ticket*, Wexford), Steuermann (*Tristan und Isolde* for Wide Open Opera) and the roles of Dancaire (*Carmen*), Cascada (*The Merry Widow*) and Yamadori (*Madama Butterfly*) for Lyric Opera Productions. Gavan has recently performed Bach's *St John Passion* and Handel's *Messiah* with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra. Forthcoming performances include engagements at Opera North as Novice (*Billy Budd*), Ping (*Turandot*), a début at Opera Holland Park as Dr Falke *Die Fledermaus*, and recitals at Wigmore Hall, London, including a concert commemorating the events in Ireland in 1916.

FERGUS SHEIL
Conductor &
Artistic Director



Fergus Sheil is Artistic Director of Wide Open Opera and Opera Theatre Company. With WOO, in 2012, Fergus conducted the first Irish production for over 50 years of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* and, in 2014, the Irish premiere of John Adams' *Nixon in China*. As artistic director he has delivered co-productions of Gerald Barry's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (with NI Opera) and *The Last Hotel* by Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh (with Landmark Productions), the latter opening at the 2015 Edinburgh International Festival before appearing in the Dublin Theatre Festival, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and St Ann's Warehouse, New York, as well as being filmed for Sky Arts. Appointed Artistic Director of Opera Theatre Company in 2013 he has conducted Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* and Verdi's *Rigoletto* on tour throughout Ireland and later this year conducts Mozart's *Don Giovanni* in a specially commissioned translation by Roddy Doyle at the Dublin Theatre Festival and Cork Opera House. As an orchestral conductor, Fergus has a strong relationship with the RTE National Symphony Orchestra having recently toured the orchestra in major repertoire including Beethoven's Symphony No 9 (*Choral*) and Mahler Symphony No 2 (*Resurrection*).

JAMIE VARTAN
Set and Costume
Designer



Jamie Vartan has worked as a theatre/opera designer in Ireland, the UK and Europe, with representations at the Prague Quadrennial 1999, 2007 and 2011, and World Stage Design 2013 (where he won the Best Set Design award). His credits include Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh's *The Last Hotel* with Landmark Productions and Wide Open Opera, Walsh's *Misterman* for Landmark Productions and Galway International Arts Festival, and subsequently New York and London, for which he won an Irish Times Theatre Award and was nominated for an Evening Standard Award; *Bondagers* (Royal Lyceum Theatre, Edinburgh); *Ballyturk* (Landmark Productions and GIAF; National Theatre, London); *Khandan* (Royal Court Theatre, London); *Mass Observation* (Almeida Theatre, London); *The Lost Child Trilogy* (David Glass Ensemble); and productions at Nottingham Playhouse and the Abbey Theatre, Dublin. His opera designs include *A Village Romeo and Juliet* (Wexford Festival Opera; 2013 Irish Times Irish Theatre Award for Best Set Design); *La traviata* (Malmö); *Ariadne auf Naxos* (Salzburg); *Il pirata* (Marseilles); *Carmen* (Lisbon); *The Queen of Spades* (Teatro alla Scala, Milan); and productions for The Royal Opera, London; Scottish Opera; Teatro Lirico di Cagliari; Teatro San Carlo, Naples; and in Florence and Parma.

SINÉAD WALLACE
Lighting Designer



Sinéad graduated from Trinity College in 2004 where she studied Drama and Theatre. She received Irish Times Theatre Awards for Best Lighting in 2010 for *Happy Days* (Corn Exchange), in 2009 for *Knives in Hens* (Landmark Productions) and in 2007 for *Saved* (Abbey Theatre) and *Don Carlos* (Rough Magic). Sinéad's recent lighting designs include *Rigoletto* (Opera Theatre Company), *A Girl is a Half-formed Thing* (Corn Exchange), *A Tender Thing* (Siren Productions), *Body and Forgetting* (Liz Roche Dance Company). Previous designs include *Oedipus*, *By the Bog of Cats*, *Christ Deliver Us*, *La Dispute*, *The Seafarer*, and *True West* (Abbey Theatre), *Miss Julie* (Landmark Productions), *Ellamenope Jones*, *Fewer Emergencies*, *The Public*, *The Drowned World* and *The Illusion* (Randolf SD | The Company) and *The Mental* (Little John Nee).

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CHORUS, COVERS & SUPERNUMERARIES

For this production of *The Barber of Seville*, Wide Open Opera has collaborated with the DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama to showcase students as the majority of the chorus, and to offer advanced students opportunities to cover roles within the opera.

Wide Open Opera would like to acknowledge the strong support of DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama for this production and we hope that the students have had a very positive experience through this collaboration.

In tandem with the rehearsals of the principal artists and chorus, a complete cover cast has been rehearsed by Assistant Conductor Killian Farrell, Assistant Director, Davey Kelleher and Assistant Répétiteur Maria Geheran. This process culminates in a Cover Showcase performance in the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre on Friday 22nd April with the full orchestra and chorus of *The Barber of Seville*. Through this process, Wide Open Opera has been able to engage with an emerging generation of Irish opera singers, to offer them unparalleled challenges and experiences and to plant seeds for future collaborations.

CHORUS OF WIDE OPEN OPERA

TENOR

Conor Breen
Conor Gibbons*
YoungWoo Kim
Catalin Lazurca*
David Lynn*
Oisín Ó Dálaigh*
Josh Spink*
Ben Sweeney*

BASS

Lewis Dillon*
Eoghan Desmond
Rory Dunne*
Cormac Lawlor
Seamus Ludden
Matthew Mannion*
Kevin Neville*
David Scott*

COVER ROLES

Fiorello	Rory Dunne*
Count Almaviva	David Lynn*
Figaro	David Scott*
Rosina	Leanne Fitzgerald*
Dr Bartolo	Cormac Lawlor
Berta	Aoife Gibney*
Don Basilio	Kevin Neville*

SUPERNUMERARIES

Leanne Fitzgerald*
Naho Koizumi*

*DENOTES DIT STUDENT

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Concertmaster: Fionnuala Hunt

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VIOLIN 1

Fionnuala Hunt (concertmaster)
Anita Vedres
Lynda O'Connor
Roisin Walters
Katie O'Connor
Deirdre Reddy
Feilimídh Numan
Rachel Grimes
Aoife Dowdall
Siobhan Doyle

VIOLIN 2

Paul O'Hanlon
Nicola Cleary
Rachel Du
Lucy Perkins
Robert Mahon
Aoife Ní Dhornain
Ailbhe Clancy
Marian Power

VIOLA

Craig Pecherek
Carla Vedres
Margaret Lynch
Niamh Roche
Karen Dervan
David Kenny

VIOLONCELLO

Ailbhe McDonagh
Sokol Koka
Delia Lynch
Siobhan Lynch
Aoife Burke
Aoife Dennedy

DOUBLE BASS

Aura Stone
Paul Stephens
Sarah Halpin

FLUTE / PICCOLO

Riona O'Duinnin
Marie Comiskey

OBOE

Rachel Clegg
Rebecca Halliday

CLARINET

Conor Sheil
Seamus Wylie

BASSOON

Ates Kirkan
John Hearne

FRENCH HORN

Cuan Ó Seireadáin
Eneko O'Carroll

TRUMPET

David Collins
Christopher Dowdall

TIMPANI

Noel Eccles

PERCUSSION

Noel Eccles
Alex Petcu
Paddy Nolan

GUITAR

Ewan Cowley

ORCHESTRA CONTRACTOR

Joe Csibi

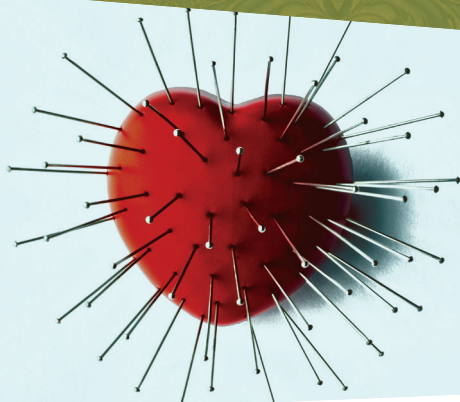


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WIDE OPEN OPERA

Wide Open Opera is one of Ireland's newest and most innovative opera companies. Founded by Fergus Sheil and Gavin O'Sullivan in 2012, its inaugural outing was a full-scale production of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, the first performances of this opera in Ireland in 50 years.

Since then the company has championed new repertoire including operas by Irish composers Gerald Barry, Raymond Deane, Brian Irvine and Donnacha Dennehy as well as giving the Irish premiere of *Nixon in China* by John Adams.

Wide Open Opera has collaborated with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, Crash Ensemble and the Orchestra of Wexford Festival Opera. It has presented work in Ireland's leading venues such as the Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, Gaiety Theatre, National Concert Hall and O'Reilly Theatre in Dublin, Cork Opera House, Lime Tree Theatre, Limerick, as well as performances in Northern Ireland in co-production with NI Opera.

In addition, WOO has delivered a major public art opera commission for Dublin City Council, *Things We Throw Away*, performed in public spaces throughout the city and available to view online.

Wide Open Opera's most recent production was the world premiere of a new opera *The Last Hotel* by Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh, co-produced with Landmark Productions. It opened at the 2015 Edinburgh International Festival before also appearing at the Dublin Theatre Festival, Royal Opera House, London and St Ann's Warehouse New York. The opera was filmed in collaboration with Brink Films for Sky Arts and first broadcast in April 2016.

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WOO PRODUCTIONS



2012 **TRISTAN UND ISOLDE**
Wagner



2013 **THE ALMA FETISH** (PREMIERE)
Raymond Deane & Gavin Kostick



2013 **THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST**
(IRISH PREMIERE) – Gerald Barry



2014 **NIXON IN CHINA** (IRISH PREMIERE) –
John Adams & Alice Goodman



2014 **THINGS WE THROW AWAY** (PREMIERE)
Brian Irvine & John McIlduff



2014 **THE OLDEST WOMAN IN LIMERICK** (PREMIERE)
Brian Irvine & John McIlduff



2015 **THE LAST HOTEL** (PREMIERE)
Donnacha Dennehy & Enda Walsh



2016 **IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA**
Rossini

SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF WIDE OPEN OPERA

If you have enjoyed tonight's performance please keep in touch and help us develop some of our future plans.

FUTURE PLANS FOR WIDE OPEN OPERA

At Wide Open Opera we have big plans ahead. Our successes to date in championing new opera and in providing unique experiences of existing repertoire for audiences at home and internationally have encouraged us to be ambitious for the future of Opera in Ireland.

Our recent acclaimed production of *The Last Hotel* by Donnacha Dennehy and Enda Walsh was a rare (possibly unique) example of an Irish opera production with a major international tour to Edinburgh and London (2015), New York (2016) and Luxembourg (2017). We plan to build on this success with future new operas that will have major platforms both in Ireland and further afield.

At the same time we are also committed to working with outstanding Irish performers and creative teams to perform works from the established opera repertoire. Presenting acclaimed Irish singers such as Tara Erraught and Gavan Ring in *The Barber of Seville* is part of this mission. We plan to showcase other celebrated singers and creative teams in similar ways in the future.

As we plan to deliver on this mission, we are committed to working with the Arts Council, Culture Ireland, the Department of the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht as well as our partners in the opera sector and more broadly in the worlds of music and theatre, to see how best all of the resources of the country can be harnessed to deliver a more secure, more vibrant and more engaging future for Opera.

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We would be very happy to hear your thoughts and suggestions via our website, Facebook or Twitter

DON'T KEEP IT A SECRET

If you have enjoyed tonight's production, and would like to see more, spread the word. Tell your friends and colleagues.

FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS

A small number of generous patrons have very kindly supported this production of *The Barber of Seville*.

If you would like to play a part in a future production, or arrange a fundraising event, please contact us via our website

www.wideopenopera.com



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